

RECREATION

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Arlington's Recreation Department offered hundreds of programs and facilities rentals for Arlington residents in 2021, operating at approximately eighty percent participation capacity due to the continuing pandemic. The Department operates as a self-supporting enterprise in the Town and does not utilize general fund dollars to support the staff, programs, or the Ed Burns Arena.

The chart below gives an overview of the usage at the rink for the previous 6-years, please note that the FY2021 season was impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic which is reflected in lower than usual numbers.

Ed Burns Arena	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Ice Rental Hours	2,032	1,795	1,643	1,559	1,379	1,293
Public Skate - Adult	4,795	6,288	5,730	4,581	3,858	479
Public Skate - Child/Senior	7,643	4,805	6,623	6,732	6,434	714
Skate Rentals	3,325	3,386	4,106	3,405	3,202	988
Skate Sharpening	845	528	636	352	146	92
Stick and Puck	1,377	1,425	1,469	1,102	1,121	850

The Department has been committed to providing quality affordable programs and community wide special events. The chart below gives an overview of the program attendance for the previous 6-years, please note that the FY2021 season was impacted due to the pandemic which is reflected in lower than usual numbers.

Season	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Summer	3,806	3,469	3,197	2,807	2,214	4,781
Fall	1,370	1,265	1,300	1,042	1,204	2,088
Winter	2,333	2,445	2,525	2,387	1,745	1,571
Spring	1,529	2,145	2,223	1,306	0	2,121
Kids Care Memberships	163	135	124	169	163	124
Total	9,201	9,459	9,369	7,711	5,326	10,685

Overall, the participation numbers in recreational programs has fluctuated over the last few years with a major drop in FY20 but a strong rebound in FY21.

The access to a primary recreational program space has the biggest potential impact on the Department's ability to maintain participant numbers. Continued access to school gymnasiums, cafeterias and classrooms will be critical in the Department's ability to maintain its level of recreational programming and licensed early education and care programs. It is important for the Department to continually explore alternative program locations.

The numbers at the Reservoir Beach have fluctuated over the last several years and the beach did not open during the Summer of 2020 and numbers were impacted by the ongoing construction project in the Summer of 2021. The chart below represents the number of annual beach goers through the FY2021 season:

Reservoir	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Adult Resident	279	215	132	142	142	48
Child Resident	339	198	153	126	126	62
Senior Citizen	68	53	56	42	42	86
Resident Family	404	338	892	712	178	310
Total Tags Sold	1,090	804	1,523	1,217	485	506
Total Daily Passes	8,806	11,782	9,239	9,775	17,590	4,611

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The Recreation Department works closely with Public Works to try and balance field usage with field conditions. The number of fields has remained constant over the years, but the influx in the school age population has increased the demand on field space. There is also a growing request for new leagues and pick-up adult usage. The Department will continue to work with the Park Commission, various user groups, friends groups, and residents to seek solutions for these challenges.

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Arlington Recreation continues to manage the capital improvement projects for the Park and Recreation Commission. Projects in 2021 consisted of:

- Reservoir Phase II
- Summer Street Playground ADA Upgrades
- Repairs and upgrades to our playgrounds based on findings in the 2019 playground audit and 2021 playground safety inspections.

2022 Goals

The Department will continue to offer its state licensed afterschool and preschool programs. The Department will also be adding new programs and outdoor facilities to keep up with the increased demand of the sport of pickleball. The Department will also be implementing a number of recommendations from Tufts University School of Occupational Therapy for inclusion-based programming.

The Department has a number of projects scheduled for 2022 including a new ADA lift for the Ed Burns Arena, Spy Pond Playground Renovation, Hurd Field Renovation, Design for the Stratton School, Peirce School and Bishop School playgrounds, and continued playground upgrades in response to the 2019 playground audit and 2021 safety inspection.



Images from Arlington Reservoir Phase II project: Wooden ship in playground area, a birdseye view of the playground in process and new pathway towards Hurd field.